



Distracted Driving

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT



The Problem

- ▶ In 2012 there were 3328 traffic fatalities in the U.S. caused by distracted driving.
- ▶ There were 421,000 people injured in 2012 as a result of distracted driving.
- ▶ 25% of teen drivers respond to a text message once or more every time they drive.

* Data from distraction.gov, Official US Government website for distracted driving



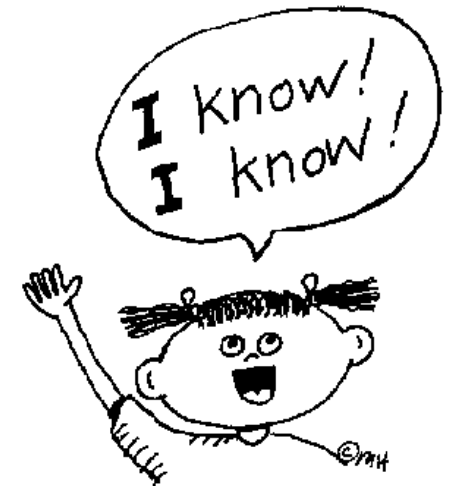
The Search for an Answer

- ▶ Traditional enforcement made it difficult to identify violators
 - ▶ Violator behavior was difficult to determine
 - ▶ Marked patrol units are more visible
- ▶ Non-Traditional enforcement ideas:
 - ▶ Using a stationary spotter
 - ▶ Create enforcement zones



An attempt at an answer.

- ▶ Identified that everyone has a story about a distracted driver
- ▶ Mobile spotter in casual clothing calling out violations to a marked unit
- ▶ Spotters were able to observe violators for longer periods of time
- ▶ Education and Awareness were the focus of the program



Media Attention



Meridian Township Police use officers in plain clothes, unmarked cars to catch distracted drivers



Meridian police spotters watch for distracted drivers



Undercover Cops Stopping Distracted Drivers

Public Response

- ▶ We received feedback from multiple sources
 - ▶ Email
 - ▶ Telephone calls
 - ▶ Comments to press
- ▶ Public response was supportive



“Glad to hear that someone is finally cracking down on these numb-skulls. I'm getting really tired of people that pay more attention to their phone than they do the road in front of them.”

- ▶ There were some negative responses

“what a complete farce. Who's robbing who? Hire fifty more jail the whole town spineless cons.”

- ▶ The message was received

Now What?

- ▶ Education to public is ongoing
- ▶ Continue with random enforcement
- ▶ Partner with neighboring agencies
- ▶ Seek funding sources



Thank You

Lieutenant Ken Plaga
Meridian Township Police
517-853-4896
Plaga@meridian.mi.us

